

Message Text

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14

ACTION STR-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 STRE-00 FEA-01

AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FRB-03

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 OMB-01 /123 W

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P R 291011Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5849

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

USDEL MTN GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 3623

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, MTN, ASEAN, SN

SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT OF STR DENT FOR MTN DISCUSSIONS

REF: (A) STATE 185876, (B) SINGAPORE 3536

1. EMBASSY WOULD WELCOME AMBASSADOR'S DENT'S VISIT TO SINGAPORE. BELIEVE HE COULD HAVE USEFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE POLICY MAKERS AND OPPORTUNITY WOULD ALSO BE PRESENT FOR AN ADDRESS TO AMERICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL. WE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE TO CONFIRM OUR VIEW REGARDING DESIRABILITY OF AMBASSADOR DENT'S VISIT AND SUITABILITY OF PROPOSED TIMING.

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2. REGARDING SUGGESTION PARA 5 REF A THAT AMBASSADOR DENT MEET WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES AS A GROUP IN JAKARTA, WE HAVE RESERVATIONS. SEEN FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE FOR THE USG TO AGAIN SEEK A CONSULTATIVE SESSION, ALBEIT AD HOC, WITH ASEAN. OUR PREVIOUS APPROACHES REGARDING SUCH CONTACTS HAVE BEEN POLITELY REBUFFED OR HAVE FALLEN ON DEAF EARS. THE ASEAN COUNTRIES CAN'T HELP BUT BE COGNIZANT OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO DEAL WITH THEM AS A GROUP BUT ARE NOT YET PREPARED TO TREAT WITH US IN THIS MANNER. WE SUSPECT THAT REASON FOR THIS RELUCTANCE SO FAR HAS MORE TO DO WITH ASEAN'S APPARENT DIFFICULTIES IN ACHIEVING TANGIBLE PROGRESS IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE (VIZ. RECENT MEETINGS OF ASEAN COMMITTEES ON INDUSTRY AND TRADE), THAN WITH PREOCCUPATION OF DISTANCING ITSELF FROM ANY OF THE MAJOR POWERS, ALTHOUGH THIS IS CLEARLY A CONSIDERATION. SUPPORTIVE OF OUR VIEW IS INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF SECOND MEETING OF ASEAN-EC JOINT STUDY GROUP.

3. WE WOULD NOTE PARENTHETICALLY THAT WE FAIL TO SEE WHY ANY MEETING WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES AS A GROUP SHOULD BE HELD IN JAKARTA. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THERE IS NOT MEETING OF ASEAN ECONOMIC OFFICIALS SCHEDULED FOR THAT CITY IN SEPTEMBER 22 - OCTOBER 2 TIME FRAME. MOREOVER, PRESENCE IN JAKARTA OF FLEDGLING ASEAN SECRETARIAT IS HARDLY A RECOMMENDATION FOR HOLDING SUCH A MEETING THERE. (INDEED, A MUCH BETTER CASE COULD BE ADDUCED FOR SINGAPORE WHICH IS NOW THE VENUE OF THE ASEAN STANDING COMMITTEE AND IS HOST TO THE ASEAN TRADE COMMITTEE.) IN CONCLUSION, IT SEEMS TO US THAT IF AND WHEN TIME ARRIVES THAT ANY CONSULTATIONS WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES AS A GROUP ARE DEEMED DESIRABLE (AND WE SEE MERIT IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS), THEN SUCH TALKS SHOULD OCCUR IN GENEVA WHERE ASEAN COUNTRIES HAVE ESTABLISHED MTN WORKING GROUP.

4. REACTION OF GOS TO PROPOSED VISIT PLUS POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS WILL BE FORWARDED SHORTLY.
HOLDRIDGE

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